



POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP (PDS) GUIDE¹

1. Priority

The Post-doctoral Research Scholarship (PDS) Programme is a strategic priority for the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It is aimed at creating a vibrant research and postgraduate environment and promoting excellence in research. It is also an opportunity for newly qualified doctoral candidates to develop and hone their research and publication skills by expanding their academic credentials and contributing to the knowledge base of the University and the country as a whole.

2. Duration and funding

- 2.1 The initial duration of a post-doctoral scholarship is 12 months, renewable subject to proof of satisfactory progress as set out hereunder. Subject to Immigration Regulations, Colleges may elect to make the appointments for two years; however the grant may be withdrawn in this instance if after 12 months satisfactory progress was not shown.
- 2.2 Each scholarship funding consists of a monthly stipend, determined annually for the full academic year by the University Research Office.
- 2.3 For 2015, the post-doctoral scholarship stipend has been set at R180 000 per annum, plus R20 000 towards research expenses that are accessed through the research code administered by the supervisor of the post-doctoral scholar. This amount may be revisited from time to time by the Scholarship Committee.
- 2.4 Post-doctoral scholars are appointed in compliance with the UKZN *Guidelines for Post-Doctoral Research Scholarship* (Annexure A), SARS requirements stipulated in the SARS-HESA document *Binding Class Ruling: Higher Education South Africa* (Annexure B) and PWC *Annexure 2.1 Policy for Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships / Post-Doctoral Research Fellows* (Annexure C).
- 2.5 A post-doctoral scholar may only hold one post-doctoral scholarship at a time. Should a post-doctoral scholar be awarded another post-doctoral scholarship example a NRF or Claude Leon, the UKZN post-doctoral scholarship may be deferred. In general it should be noted that any post-doctoral scholar earning more than the stipulated amount for

¹ 2015 PDS Guide, incorporating the UKZN and CLMS Guidelines and Practices; The Postdoc Working Group *Post-doctoral Handbook* (November 2013)). Served before the RSG in October 2014.

the scholarship will be liable to pay tax on the amount that is in excess of the university or any other post-doctoral award.

3. Eligibility criteria

- 3.1 A post-doctoral scholar must have obtained a doctoral degree during the last five years, unless specifically motivated and approved by the relevant College Dean of Research.
- 3.2 The applicant should preferably not be older than 45 years at the closing date for applications, unless specifically motivated and approved by the relevant College Dean of Research.
- 3.3 The post-doctoral scholar must be based at UKZN for the duration of the scholarship. Any exceptions must be motivated and approved by the relevant College Dean of Research. Post-doctoral scholars are entitled to 21 days' vacation leave annually.

4. Expectations and role of the PDS

- 4.1 The purpose of the post-doctoral scholarship is to:
 - 4.1.1 provide an opportunity to promising young researchers to enhance their research skills and expertise;
 - 4.1.2 allow the post-doctoral scholar an opportunity to engage in a full-time period of uninterrupted approved research under the supervision of a member of the academic staff in one of the Schools of the relevant College;
 - 4.1.2 encourage post-doctoral scholars to increase publication outputs of the School; and
 - 4.1.3 interact with other academics, postgraduate students and other post-doctoral scholars to contribute to a vibrant research culture within the School.
- 4.2 Each post-doctoral scholar is required to publish or have accepted for publication, during the first year of the scholarship, at least one article (60 PUs) in a Department of Higher Education and Training accredited journal and provide proof that two additional articles have been submitted for publication and under review in such a journal. [Post-doctoral scholars are required to acquaint themselves with the accredited journal lists available on the Research Office website.]
- 4.3 Due acknowledgement to the University of KwaZulu-Natal must always be made by listing UKZN as institutional affiliation where results of research work are published or presented in any form or publicly disseminated.
- 4.4 Participation by the post-doctoral scholars in School and College research activities is expected.
- 4.5 A post-doctoral scholar is not an employee of UKZN and as such not entitled to staff employment benefits. They are senior postgraduates. As such, post-doctoral scholars are given access to the UKZN e-mail system, the library and all its resources, as well as

other health, sports and parking facilities. Post-doctoral scholars must abide by all university policies, rules, procedures and codes of conduct.

5. Applications

- 5.1 In compliance with SARS regulations governing “open bursaries”, a call for applications will be placed on the University of KwaZulu-Natal LAN, as well as in national newspapers at least once annually. Appointments may however be made during the year depending on the availability of funding.
- 5.2 The prescribed form is available from the relevant College Dean of Research (CDR).
- 5.3 The following documents must accompany the application for a post-doctoral scholarship:
 - 5.3.1 Certified copy of ID/passport.
 - 5.3.2 Full curriculum vitae, including a list of publications.
 - 5.3.3 A research proposal, including a description of the rationale and methodology of the proposed project, the proposed publication outputs and a summary of the proposal. It is preferable that the proposal is approved by the internal supervisor (UKZN academic staff member), although this is not a mandatory requirement.
 - 5.3.4 The supervisor’s curriculum vitae (if known), including publications over the last three years. It is preferable that the supervisor should hold a doctoral degree and have a reasonable supervision and publication record.
 - 5.3.5 Academic record if the applicant is not ex-UKZN student.
 - 5.3.6 Three contactable referees.
- 5.4 Applications must be sent to the office of CDR for initial assessment.

6. School Process

- 6.1 Suitable applications that meet the minimum requirements will be forwarded by the CDR to the Academic Leader Research (ALR) in the relevant School for peer review of the proposal.
- 6.2 The application must be recommended by the School Research and Higher Degrees Committee (SRHDC) or executively by the ALR **after** discussion with the Dean and Head of School, as all post-doctoral scholarship appointments have implications and opportunities for the School. [Note however that the College wants to facilitate applications with knowledge of all concerned role players.]
- 6.3 The SRHDC and/or the ALR must allocate a suitable supervisor if such a supervisor has not yet been identified and allocated.
- 6.4 By the ALR and the DHoS signing the application, the School agrees to accept the post-doctoral scholar and undertake to allocate suitable workspace and equipment to the post-doctoral scholar and to assist in the introduction and assimilation of the post-doctoral scholar into the School.

7. Final College decision

The signed recommendation by the School is submitted to the CDR for the final decision to accept or reject the application. An interviewing and selection panel may be constituted to select appropriate candidates.

8. Notification to candidates

All applicants will be advised in writing by the CDR and if successful, an acceptance letter will be sent to the post-doctoral scholar for acceptance and signature.

9. Foreign applicants

If a foreign applicant is accepted as a post-doctoral scholar, a visa letter is sent to applicant to assist the post-doctoral scholar to obtain the required visa / permit, medical insurance and the need for a South African bank account. It is the responsibility of the post-doctoral scholars to obtain the necessary visa / permit for such post-doctoral research as may be applicable at the time of application. Note: This must usually be applied for in the country of residence of the applicant and not in South Africa. Foreign post-doctoral scholars must present themselves to the UKZN International Office on arrival or shortly thereafter.

10. Appointment letters

On arrival, the office of the CDR will assist with the appointment letter and other required forms. The post-doctoral scholars will be issued a post-doctoral scholar card by the University that is neither a staff card, nor a student card. The post-doctoral scholar is subject to the UKZN disciplinary and grievance procedures.

11. Payment of stipend

Once the post-doctoral scholar has been accepted and the relevant documentation signed, funds will be paid out by the University in monthly instalments, subject to satisfactory progress and compliance with this policy.

12. Introductions to the School

- 12.1 The CDR will assist with the introduction of the post-doctoral scholar to the relevant School.
- 12.2 The relevant ALR and Dean and Head of School will assist in the introduction and assimilation of the post-doctoral scholar into the School.

13. Facilities

The School (Dean and Head of School, ALR and supervisor) is responsible for providing office space, phone and e-mail access and stationary to the post-doctoral scholar. A computer may have to be provided if the post-doctoral scholar does not have access to a personal computer. The post-doctoral scholar will be given access to the physical and electronic library facilities of the University.

14. Conditions and Restrictions

As the objective of a post-doctoral scholar is uninterrupted full-time research, certain conditions and restrictions apply:

- 14.1 A scholarship awarded for a specific project must be used for that project only. If the project changes; an application must be made for approval for an amendment of the project to the College Research Office.
- 14.2 The post-doctoral scholars are not allowed to be employed to do any additional work for payment, except as provided for herein.
- 14.3 Although there is no obligation to do so, a post-doctoral scholar may teach or do non-research related work for up to 12 paid hours per week at the University rate for casual workers with a PhD. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to monitor that the additional work of the post-doctoral scholar does not exceed the maximum number of weekly hours or distract from the purpose of the post-doctoral scholar.
- 14.4 Post-doctoral scholars are encouraged to take on mentorship role for postgraduate students.
- 14.5 Post-doctoral scholars may not register for a degree during their term of the scholarship.

15. Additional obligations

- 15.1 Holders of the post-doctoral scholarship will be required to sign an agreement with the College Research Office, embodying the provisions of this policy, and setting out performance targets.
- 15.2 Ethical clearance in terms of the University policy is required. The attention of all persons holding UKZN PDSs are drawn to University's Ethics Policy which may be accessed through the Research Office web page.
- 15.3 Holders of the scholarship must inform the College Research Office if they received any bursaries, grants or emoluments from other sources during the tenure of their scholarship. The University reserves the right to reconsider the scholarship in the light of such additional awards that the scholarship holder receives.

16. Progress Reports

Post-doctoral scholars are required to submit bi-annual progress report to the CDR. All these reports must be signed by the supervisor.

17. Role of the Supervisor

The role of the supervisor includes the following:

- 17.1 to assist the post-doctoral scholar with the application and finalisation of the application (if not yet completed);
- 17.2 to host and mentor the post-doctoral scholar within the agreed goals and objectives;
- 17.3 to make the appropriate logistical support arrangements to ensure support for the productivity of the post-doctoral scholar, including office space, computer facilities, access to the library, etc;
- 17.4 to consider monthly progress reports prior to submission to the College; and
- 17.5 to ensure that all the post-doctoral scholar's publications are timeously uploaded onto IRMA.

18. Withdrawal and Termination

- 18.1 The post-doctoral scholarship may be withdrawn at any time by UKZN if the work or conduct of the holder is considered unsatisfactory. UKZN will give 30-days' notice and the grant may be required to be paid back pro-rata for the time the post-doctoral scholar was appointed at UKZN.
- 18.2 The post-doctoral scholar may be terminated by mutual agreement and 30-days' notice period. The grant may be required to be paid back pro-rata for the time the post-doctoral scholar was appointed at UKZN where the post-doctoral scholar did not meet the agreed-upon requirements.

19. Renewal

A renewal or extension application is required after ten (10) months, two months before the end on the previous year of the Scholarship and is contingent on the PDS having fulfilled the existing contractual obligations and the availability of funds. The applications must have the following supporting documents:

- 19.1 Updated curriculum vitae.
- 19.2 List of publications published and those submitted for publication to Department of Higher Education and Training accredited journals (under UKZN affiliation) as well as copies of these articles.
- 19.3 Letter of support from the Supervisor endorsed by the Dean and Head of School.

Any extension beyond the second year, including streamlining into academic posts will be subject to meeting the publications and faculty requirements. The scholarship may be renewed for a third year, if four or more accredited journal articles are published in the first two years of the award.

20. Certificate of Completion

A certificate of completion of the scholarship will be issued listing the academic achievements and stating the period of time spent at the University.

For detailed information on:

- accommodation
- visas
- medical cover
- orientation
- opening of a bank account
- parking disks
- health clinics
- sporting facilities

Please consult the Postdoc Working Group *Post-Doctoral Handbook* (November 2013)